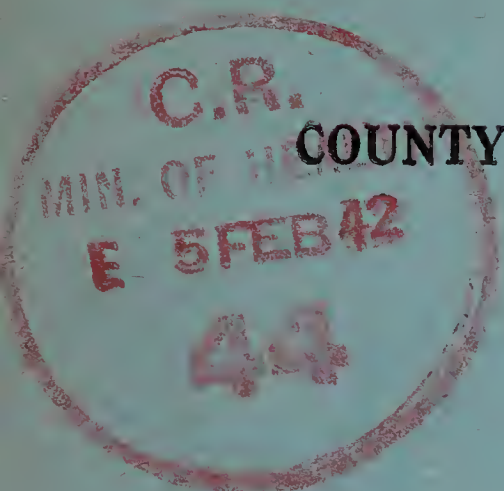


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COUNTY BOROUGH



OF SOUTHPORT.



REPORT

UPON THE

Health and Sanitary Condition

OF THE

County Borough of Southport

For the Year 1940.

*(including the Thirty-second Annual Report of the
School Medical Officer).*

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COUNTY BOROUGH OF SOUTHPORT.

ANNUAL REPORT

OF THE

MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH AND SCHOOL
MEDICAL OFFICER FOR THE YEAR 1940.

TO THE CHAIRMAN AND MEMBERS OF THE HEALTH
COMMITTEE.

The abridged form of report recommended by the Ministry of Health has again been adhered to. The statistical tables and tabular statements included in reports presented before the commencement of the war are completed and kept in the department for future reference.

The birth-rates and death-rates have been based upon an estimated population figure supplied by the Registrar-General. Local observers usually have no reason to quarrel with the mid-summer estimate provided annually, but it will be appreciated that it must be extremely difficult in times such as these to arrive at such an estimate with any reasonable degree of accuracy.

The year is noteworthy for the continued low infantile mortality rate. Forty children died before they attained the age of one year. The rate of 43 deaths per 1,000 births is the lowest ever recorded.

During the year the numbers of children immunised under the Committee's scheme cannot be considered satisfactory, but this was largely influenced by the great strain thrown upon the doctors in the town during the early months of the year when there was a marked increase in the number of persons suffering from Influenza.

The most recent figures show that it is reasonable to estimate that 40 per cent. of the children in the town under 15 years of age have been protected against this disease.

Despite the additional work thrown upon the various branches of the Health Department as a result of the war, I am confident that in the main the standard of work is comparable with that which is possible in peacetime. How long this standard can be maintained depends first of all upon the extent of any further demands which may be made upon the Health Department and secondly upon the extent to which the staff is depleted by the various Government schemes which are to be put into force. The difficulties already encountered in respect to the engagement of nursing and domestic staffs for hospitals and new residential institutions and the retention of these staffs have been very great, and an extension to these staffs of the principle already adopted in respect to certain classes of workers in the Casualty Services, whereby they are not permitted to leave their posts without the permission of the responsible authority, would go far to solve one of the problems which daily confronts those who have to keep such institutions in commission.

I am,

Yours faithfully,

W. E. FITZGERALD,

Medical Officer of Health and

School Medical Officer.

VITAL STATISTICS.

Population.—The population at the census of 1931 was 78,927. The Registrar-General's estimate of the population for the middle of 1940 was 88,550, and the birth-rates and death-rates for the year have been calculated on this number.

Birth-rate.—The registered births assigned to the town totalled 871 (males 448; females 423), which is represented by a birth-rate of 9.84 per 1,000 of the population. Fifty-nine, or 5.9 per cent. of the births were illegitimate. The number of still-births registered was forty, which number includes six still-births in the illegitimate group.

			Live Births.		Total.	Still-births.	
			Legiti- mate.	Illegiti- mate.		Legiti- mate.	Illegiti- mate.
Male	.....	.....	419	29	448	17	4
Female	.....	.....	401	22	423	17	2
			-----	---	-----	---	---
Total	.....	.....	820	51	871	34	6
			-----	---	-----	---	---

Death-rate.—The registered deaths assigned to the town amounted to 1,418, of which 608 were males and 810 were females.

The gross death-rate (after exclusions and inclusions) was 16.01

The rate corrected for age and sex 12.65

65 per cent. of the deaths were of persons aged 65 years and over.

PRINCIPAL CAUSES OF DEATH.

Tuberculosis (all forms)	33	Nephritis	53
Cancer	184	Violence (including suicide)	47
Heart Disease	400	Influenza	36
Respiratory Disease	183	Intra-cranial vasc : lesions	179

ZYMOTIC DEATH-RATE.

Diphtheria	1.	Typhoid	Nil.	Diarrhoea	Nil.
Scarlet Fever	Nil.	Measles	1.	Whooping Cough	1.
Total deaths—3.		Rate per 1,000—0.03,			

**BIRTH-RATES, DEATH-RATES, ANALYSIS OF MORTALITY, MATERNAL MORTALITY
AND CASE NOTES FOR CERTAIN INFECTIOUS DISEASES IN THE YEAR 1940.**

Provisional figures based on Weekly and Quarterly Returns.

	England and Wales.	126 C.Bs. and Great Towns including London.	148 Smaller Towns Resident Pop. 25,000-50,000 1931 Census.	London Adm. County.	Southport.
	Rates per 1,000 Population.				
Live Births	14.60	16.00	15.70	13.70	9.84
Still Births	0.55	0.64	0.55	0.44	0.45
<i>Deaths :—</i>					
All Causes	14.30	15.80	12.80	17.80	16.01
Typhoid and Paratyphoid	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	—
Smallpox	—	—	—	—	—
Measles	0.02	0.02	0.02	0.01	0.01
Scarlet Fever	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	—
Whooping Cough	0.02	0.02	0.02	0.00	0.01
Diphtheria	0.06	0.07	0.05	0.01	0.01
Influenza	0.32	0.29	0.30	0.18	0.41
<i>Notifications :—</i>					
Smallpox	0.00	—	—	—	—
Scarlet Fever	1.63	1.53	1.57	0.82	1.69
Diphtheria	1.16	1.29	1.21	0.61	0.69
Enteric	0.07	0.06	0.10	0.06	0.03
Erysipelas	0.33	0.36	0.30	0.35	0.27
Pneumonia	1.20	1.37	1.00	0.87	1.29
Cerebro-Spinal Fever	0.32	0.33	0.29	0.28	0.10
Whooping Cough	1.34	1.29	1.35	0.22	7.48
Measles	10.24	9.23	9.99	1.78	13.35
	Rates per 1,000 Live Births :—				
Deaths under 1 year of age	55	61	54	50	43
Deaths from Diarrhoea and Enteritis under 2 years of age	4.60	5.90	4.40	5.80	—
	Rates per 1,000 Total Births (Live and Still)				
<i>Maternal Mortality :</i>					
Puerperal Sepsis	0.52	Not available			—
Others	1.64				1.08
Total	2.16				1.08
<i>Notifications :—</i>					
Puerperal Fever	11.96	13.90	9.73	{ 3.34 13.30 }	12.07
Puerperal Pyrexia					

SANITARY CIRCUMSTANCES OF THE AREA.

Water.—The exceptionally high state of organic purity of the water was maintained.

Drainage and Sewerage.—Four cesspools were abolished in 1940, and the houses concerned drained into the public sewer.

Sanitary Inspection of the Area.—The Chief Sanitary Inspector and his staff made 28,221 visits during the year. Of these 1,448 were made as a result of complaints received from the public. The routine inspection of special premises entailed 3,136 visits.

Sanitary defects remedied :—

Houses redrained, or drains amended, etc.	169
Building and altering W.Cs.	268
Miscellaneous nuisances, etc., remedied	1,094

Abatement of Nuisances:—

Cases reported	1,140
Cases abated	1,139
Cases not abated	1
Work deferred for further negotiations	1

HOUSING.

Few dwelling-houses were built during the year. Forty-two new houses were completed and occupied, but a number of houses became unsafe for habitation due to war conditions. The number of dwelling-houses in occupation according to the rate books on the 31st March, 1940, was 23,640, which includes flats and 942 with shops; the numbers on the 31st March, 1941, were 23,606 and 932.

The general condition of house property in the town is good. Defects as they become known are subjected to the measures available to the department for remedying them, and no particular difficulty was experienced during the year in dealing with owners of property. No routine inspection of house property was carried out. One case of overcrowding was abated.

The increased population of the town has had two main effects; firstly, it has had the effect of bringing into occupation all the available housing accommodation in the town, thus reducing nearly completely that minimum number of empty houses which could always be found in pre-war days; secondly, the average number of persons per house is higher.

Because of the fact that this increased population has been absorbed to a greater degree in some parts of the town than others, it follows that the number of persons per house in those parts of the town is higher than

the average for the town generally, and the possibility of overcrowding has consequently been a factor which has caused some concern.

The billeting of large families officially under the Government Evacuation Scheme has proved a difficult problem which has been solved to some extent by the local authority, which has requisitioned large empty houses and used them for this purpose. However, families coming into the town by private arrangement, to stay with friends, for example, tend to give rise to overcrowded conditions, which are difficult to control, and in abating such overcrowding the billeting authority is unable to find billets in private houses if the family is large, and the people themselves will not go to the specially requisitioned houses. The position is one which is being carefully watched by the Health Department.

SUPERVISION OF FOOD SUPPLIES.

Milk.—There were 126 dairymen (excluding purveyors of bottled milk) in the Borough on the 31st December, 1940. Forty-seven of these are also producers, of which only three produce milk on licence granted under the terms of the Milk (Special Designations) Order, 1936.

At the end of the year the number of milk purveyors entitled to sell pasteurised milk by licence was 22.

The number of samples of milk taken for chemical analysis was 154, and of these 128 were genuine.

Twenty-six samples were taken which proved not to be genuine. It was necessary to institute legal proceedings in nine cases.

The number of samples of milk taken for bacteriological examination totalled 141. Eighty-eight of these were of milk supplies from sources inside the Borough, and fifty-three from outside the Borough. Three of the latter were found to be tuberculous.

VISITS OF INSPECTION IN CONNECTION WITH THE SUPERVISION OF FOOD.

Public Slaughter-houses	918
Private Slaughter-houses	10
Butchers' Shops	3,006
Fish and Poultry Shops	2,517
Other Shops	4,341
Restaurants, etc.	132
Ice Cream Workshops	62
Ice Cream Stalls	208
Potted Meat and Fish Works	565
Piggeries	13
Milk Farms	5
Private Premises where Pigs were killed	1
Total	<hr/> 11,778 <hr/>

INSTITUTIONAL ACCOMMODATION FOR THE AGED AND CHRONIC SICK.

The aged and chronic sick are admitted in the first instance to the Ormskirk County Hospital, and transferred to Fleetwood Road Hospital as vacancies occur.

Fourteen men and forty-two women patients were in the Fleetwood Road Hospital at the beginning of the year, and 46 patients were admitted during the year. Fourteen patients were discharged, and 24 died; thus there were 64 patients, 19 men and 45 women, in the hospital on the 31st December, 1940.

The new Nurses' Home, built by the Health Committee as part of its policy of improving the conditions under which nurses work, was put into use early in the year.

MATERNITY AND CHILD WELFARE.

Ante-Natal Clinics.—The clinics held at the Christiana Hartley Maternity Hospital and at No. 44, Hoghton Street were carried on throughout the year. Owing to the numbers of evacuated mothers in the town requiring ante-natal supervision, an additional clinic was in operation at the Chistiana Hartley Maternity Hospital and was well attended.

In all 976 mothers attended at one or other of the three clinics.

Post-Natal Clinic.—This clinic, which was stopped at the end of August, 1939, was recommenced in April, 1940. One hundred and forty-nine mothers attended this clinic.

Domiciliary Midwifery.—The four municipal midwives attended 222 cases as compared with 209 in 1939. Of these, 188 confinements were conducted by the midwife and in 34 instances the midwife attended as a maternity nurse. Ante-natal visits were made to 180 expectant mothers, the total number of visits paid being 1,714. The total number of post-natal visits made amounted to 4,123.

Twenty-eight midwives notified their intention to practise in the area of the local authority. Of these, four were engaged in the municipal service and ten were attached to the lying-in hospitals in the town. Fourteen midwives continued in private practice and were responsible for the care of 293 cases, acting in the capacity of midwife in 108 of this number, and as maternity nurse in the remaining 185 cases.

CHRISTIANA HARTLEY MATERNITY HOSPITAL.

Five hundred and eighty-four mothers were admitted to this hospital during the year. This number is again a considerable increase on the figures for previous years.

In the early part of the year the new Nurses' Home, presented to the town by Miss Hartley, was opened. This home, which is very beautifully

constructed and equipped, has proved a great asset to the nurses occupied in the hospital. More ideal quarters for the staff could hardly be imagined, and the effect of this gift on the general welfare of the nurses must be very great.

Notifications of Births.—The number of births notified was 1,179, 145 attended by doctors, and 1,034 by midwives. Thirty-four of the notifications were in respect of still-births, and 1,145 were live births.

The visits to homes paid by the Health Visitors for the past three years are as follows:—

	1938.	1939.	1940.
To expectant mothers :			
First visits	135	106	89
Total visits	694	406	310
To children under one year :			
First visits	712	626	703
Total visits	6,928	7,023	6,009
To children between 1 and 5 :			
Total visits	8,144	8,496	7,479
To boarded out children	214	112	96
To nurse children	388	149	86

Child Welfare Centres.—The following are the attendances at the Welfare Centres during the year:—

TOTAL NUMBER OF ATTENDANCES AT THE SOUTHPORT WELFARE CENTRES FOR THE YEAR 1940.

NAME OF CENTRE	ATTENDANCES							
	Nursing Mothers		Expectant Mothers		Infants		Children over 1 and under 5	
	1st Visits	Re-Visits	1st Visits	Re-Visits	1st Visits	Re-Visits	1st Visits	Re-Visits
Hampton Road	160	3,629	20	100	158	2,457	14	1,359
High Park	124	3,008	1	6	127	2,069	12	1,365
Liverpool Road	111	3,451	3	1	110	1,997	19	1,853
Crossens	83	2,079	—	—	82	1,206	15	1,110
Hoghton Street	165	2,321	2	16	140	1,538	18	1,100
Totals, 1940	643	14,488	26	123	617	9,267	78	6,787
„ 1939	579	16,107	59	190	551	9,329	79	8,739
„ 1938	537	16,906	71	254	509	9,633	—	10,060

ST. KATHERINE'S HOME.

At the beginning of the year, there were ten unmarried mothers in residence at St. Katherine's and the Home continued to carry out its Moral Welfare work throughout the year, but in September a number of the beds in the Home were reserved for the overflow of patients from the Christiana Hartley Maternity Hospital. Mothers were admitted to these beds under this arrangement until the 1st February, 1941, when all the beds were taken and the Home changed its purpose and became the St. Katherine's Emergency Maternity Hospital.

During 1940, 81 mothers were admitted. Twenty-seven of these were mothers evacuated from Liverpool and Bootle and admitted under the special arrangement referred to above.

INFECTIOUS DISEASES.

Diphtheria.—Sixty-one cases were notified during the year and all were admitted to the Isolation Hospital for treatment. The type of infection continued to be severe and one death occurred. The incidence of this disease was astonishingly low; the cases were scattered throughout the town without concentration in any particular district.

Immunisation against Diphtheria was continued and 513 children were protected in this way. The Health Committee's scheme for the free immunisation of children up to the age of fourteen years was commenced on May 1st, 1938, and the total number of children immunised up to the end of 1940 was 3,942.

Typhoid and Paratyphoid Fever.—One case of Typhoid (Enteric) Fever was notified, the source of infection was traced in this case, the patient, a female, having been a contact of a known case while on holiday in Yorkshire. She made an uninterrupted recovery.

Two cases of Paratyphoid "B" Fever were notified. One was a soldier transferred to New Hall Hospital from the E.M.S. Hospital on the Promenade. The other was a child evacuated to the town, but who had been on holiday just previous to and during the time covered by the incubation period. The usual examination of contacts was made in the latter case, but after careful enquiry the source of the infection remained obscure.

Dysentery.—Sixteen cases were notified and all were admitted to the Isolation Hospital. The organism isolated in each case was of the Sonne type. The usual supervision of contacts was undertaken.

Scarlet Fever.—One hundred and fifty cases were notified as compared with 176 in the previous year, and 139 of these were admitted to the Isolation Hospital. The disease continued to be mild in character, and no deaths were recorded as due to this complaint.

Erysipelas.—Twenty-four cases were notified as compared with thirty in the previous year. One was admitted to the Isolation Hospital for treatment.

Measles and German Measles.—In the first half of the year there was a high incidence of German Measles and 1,538 cases were notified. Twenty-nine evacuee patients were admitted to New Hall Hospital and eleven to the Annexe.

This high incidence of German Measles dropped rapidly in July and August, but was replaced by a correspondingly high incidence of Measles and a total of 1,182 notifications were received up to the end of the year. Sixty-three patients were admitted to hospital, the reasons for their admission being either that the patient was an evacuated person living in billets in the town, or on account of the fact that the home circumstances were unsuitable for the retention of the case, or the patient exhibited symptoms of sequelæ requiring more expert nursing than could be given at home.

Whooping Cough.—Six hundred and sixty-two cases were notified. This disease was frequently of a very acute character. Twenty-eight of the more serious cases were admitted to hospital and one death occurred amongst these.

Cerebro-Spinal Fever.—Nine cases were notified during the last quarter of the year. All were admitted to the Isolation Hospital for treatment. There were two deaths.

Acute Anterior Poliomyelitis (Infantile Paralysis).—Four notifications were received during the year. Two were treated at the Southport Infirmary and two at their own homes.

NEW HALL HOSPITAL.

There were 42 patients in the Fever Wards at New Hall Hospital on 1st January, 1940. Three hundred and eighty-seven patients were admitted during the year and on the 31st December the number remaining in the hospital was 50. The additional accommodation provided at the Wigan Summer School on the shore continued to be used and was of great assistance. On the 1st January, 1940, ten patients were accommodated in this Annexe. During the year twenty-eight convalescent patients were

transferred from the larger Hospital and 146 patients were admitted direct to the Annexe. On the 31st December, 1940, twenty-six patients remained.

TUBERCULOSIS.

Thirty-six of the seventy-two new cases notified were suffering from pulmonary disease as compared with thirty-seven out of the seventy-one last year. There was little difficulty in securing hospital treatment for non-pulmonary cases in hospitals outside the borough, but throughout the year there was usually insufficient accommodation in New Hall Sanatorium for all pulmonary cases requiring treatment, and a few patients were sent to sanatoria elsewhere.

At the beginning of the year there were twenty-seven patients in the sanatorium. Forty-three patients were admitted, the same number as in 1939, and twenty-eight were discharged as compared with forty-two last year. The smaller number of patients discharged was mainly due to the fact that an undue proportion of the beds available was occupied by patients in an infective condition, whose home or private circumstances prevented their discharge. Six patients died in hospital, compared with twelve last year, and at the end of the year thirty-one patients remained in hospital, nine of these occupying wooden shelters.

During the year the numbers on the Dispensary Register increased from 241 to 266, mainly due to the reception of patients transferred from other areas. Many of these transferred patients were non-infective and following their own occupation, whilst infectious patients had all secured separate accommodation of their own.

With the co-operation of the billeting officers it is ensured that evacuated persons are not billeted in the homes of tuberculous patients.

During the year examinations have been made of recruits in connection with the National Service (Armed Forces) Act, 1939, at the request of the medical boards.

VOLUNTARY TUBERCULOSIS CARE COMMITTEE.

This Committee continued to carry on its valuable work and during the year 95 cases were reported upon and assisted. The close co-operation between Dispensary and Committee, which must be present if care work is to fulfil its purpose, exists to the full, and the furtherance of the Committee's efforts is to be encouraged as a very necessary adjunct in the treatment of tuberculosis.

VENEREAL DISEASES.

At the end of 1940, 236 persons were under treatment. The new cases received at the department during the year are classified as follows:—

	M.	F.	Total.
Syphilis	17	18	35
Gonorrhoea	37	25	62
Non-V.D.	46	44	90
Transferred from other areas	6	9	15
			202

The total number of attendances in the out-patient department was 6,776. Seventy-five patients were admitted for in-patient treatment.

There were eleven maternity cases admitted:—

Syphilis	5
Gonorrhoea	6
	11

All these received ante-natal treatment with the result that full term healthy infants were born in each case.

BLIND WELFARE.

At the beginning of 1940 there were 142 blind persons on the Register. During the year 18 new names were added and 18 names removed. Of the 18 names taken off, 13 were deaths, four left the town and one person was de-certified. The total on the Register at the end of the year may be classified as follows:—(a) 60 males and 82 females; (b) three under 16 years of age; two between 16 and 21; 11 in the group 21 to 40 years; 14 between 40 and 50 years; 38 between 50 and 65 years; 14 between 65 and 70 years; 54, 70 years and over; and six persons whose ages are unknown.

The number of visits paid by the Home Teacher and her assistant to blind persons in their homes was 1,744, and 130 classes for instruction were held. Twenty-three social gatherings were arranged.

At the end of the year 92 of the blind persons on the Register were receiving weekly grants, and during the year the total grant amounted to £4,004. Seventeen blind persons are resident in approved Institutions for the Blind.

During the year a series of six lectures were delivered to blind members by Mr. C. F. Craven on anti-gas and fire fighting methods, the lectures terminating with the actual working of the stirrup pump, etc., by the blind people themselves.

SCHOOL MEDICAL SERVICE.

All the schools scheduled for routine medical inspection were visited during the year, and 2,459 children were examined. In addition, the routine inspection included 290 evacuees. There was nothing exceptional to report, and certainly no evidence of any deterioration in the general medical condition of the schoolchildren attributable to the war. In this connection the classification of the nutrition of these children is set out below, together with the figures for the previous two years for the purpose of comparison:—

	Children examined during the year.	PERCENTAGE			
		Excellent.	Normal	Slightly Sub-normal	Bad
1940.....	2,749	7·6	83·4	8·7	0·29
1939.....	1,812	10·3	82·9	6·7	0·11
1938.....	2,221	8·1	83·6	8·1	0·18

“ Special ” inspections were carried out in 9,754 cases. This number included 2,175 evacuees, examined either at school or clinic.

From October, 1940, a nutritional survey was undertaken to include all elementary schools in the town. 1,690 children brought forward by teachers, health visitors and others, as likely to require extra nourishment, were first examined carefully, and following this, all other children were rapidly reviewed. As a result, 1,473 were recommended to have either two-thirds of a pint of milk and an Oslo sandwich, or milk and mid-day meals. Unusual poverty and family medical history were taken into account, as well as actual signs of want, and the nutritional state of those recommended was as follows: A—1, B—550, C—901, D—21. The meals and sandwiches were provided from the communal kitchen, established by the Civil Defence Emergency Committee. Special precautions were taken against the possibility of infective carrier states amongst the kitchen staff.

The attendances at the various treatment clinics was generally higher than in pre-war years, this being due to the additional child population. A special clinic for minor ailments is held on one session per week, at which a member of the Bootle School Medical Staff is present.

Conditions for which the war is responsible made it necessary to increase the surveillance of schoolchildren in relation to their cleanliness. In the course of their visits to the schools, the Nurses made 28,963 inspections, and 426 individual children were found to be uncleanly. In the previous two years, the numbers were respectively:—1939, 18,701 and 268, and 1938, 21,153 and 166.

The work of the School Dental Service during the year 1940 included the routine dental inspection of 2,352 children, and 1,683 children were examined as “Specials,” making a total of 4,053, of which 3,601 were found to require treatment. The number actually treated was 3,146. The corresponding numbers for 1939 were:—2,052 routine inspections, 1,812 “Specials”, total examinations 3,864. requiring treatment 3,412, actually treated 2,537.

